

THE CASE FOR 1ST BALLOT

Brian Urlacher was among the 18 finalists announced Tuesday for the Pro Football Hall of Fame Class of 2018. In 13 seasons leading the Bears defense, Urlacher certainly had a Hall of Fame-worthy career. The only question is whether he will be a first-ballot selection.

Brad Biggs in Chicago Sports

NUCCIO DINUZZO/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Chicago Tribune

UNLIMITED DIGITAL ACCESS
eNEWSPAPER
SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE
EXPANDED SPORTS COVERAGE



QUESTIONS? CALL 1-800-TRIBUNE

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3, 2018

BREAKING NEWS AT CHICAGOTRIBUNE.CO



BRIAN CASSELLA/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

The city's James J. Versluis, an 80-foot ice-breaking tugboat built in 1957, was at work Tuesday in the Chicago River.

COLD SPELL IS ONE OF CITY'S LONGEST

As deep freeze looks likely to tie record, experts offer survival tips

BY ELVIA MALAGON AND MARY WISNIEWSKI
Chicago Tribune

With Chicago on its way to tying the record for one of the longest cold snaps in more than 50 years, residents are finding everything from their commute to their home heating sys-

tems tested.

Freezing temperatures have triggered delays on Metra, with rail breaks caused by contracting steel, and trains slowing down to reduce stress on tracks.

Meanwhile, AAA fielded 1,300 calls for service — a 73 percent increase in service requests over four weeks ago — on Tuesday morning alone, as the cold deflated tires, froze gas lines and drained car batteries.

Given the challenges of commuting, one workplace expert says the extreme weather should have managers reviewing com-

pany policy on work-from-home scenarios that could come in handy in an emergency situation. That could result in more productivity in the long run, because workers won't be out and about and risk falling ill during the cold and flu season and parents won't have to call off work if schools close, said Ellen

Turn to **Cold**, Page 6

President boasts of 'my' arsenal

'Nuclear Button' tweet comes as South Korea, North aim to talk

BY TRACY WILKINSON
Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The Trump administration reacted cautiously Tuesday to an apparent diplomatic overture from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un to neighboring South Korea and to Seoul's proposal to begin talks directly with Pyongyang next week, a move that could sideline the United States in the regional flashpoint.

Then late Tuesday, President Donald Trump reacted provocatively, boasting on Twitter of a bigger "Nuclear Button" than North Korea's.

After staying mum for two days about Kim's of-

fer, Trump early Tuesday issued a tweet from the White House that repeated his favorite insult for the North Korean ruler, and then seemed to take partial credit for any potential rapprochement while staying ambivalent about possible outcomes.

"Rocket man now wants to talk to South Korea for first time. Perhaps that is good news, perhaps not — we will see!" Trump wrote.

Trump cited the growing web of international sanctions as well as what he called "other" pressures, which he did not describe, for the nascent

Turn to **Talks**, Page 13



ANTHONY SOUFFLE/CHICAGO TRIBUNE

Off-duty Officer David Harris was killed in 2014 when a van being pursued by police crashed into his car.

Chicago, suburb to pay \$13M in 2 fatal cop chases

Settlements show police still engage in dangerous pursuits

BY JEREMY GORNER
Chicago Tribune

Jacqueline Reynolds, a 56-year-old assistant at a Chicago law firm, was killed on Chicago's South Side as she drove to a funeral when another vehicle sped past a red light and smashed into her car.

Ten months later, and less than 5 miles away, off-duty Chicago police Officer David Harris, 42, was driving home after a late shift at work when he, too, died when a speeding car plowed into his vehicle at a South Side intersection.

Both were innocent victims of high-speed chases by police officers — one from Chicago, the other from the small south suburb of Calumet Park — who acted recklessly, endangered the public and violated their departments' pursuit policies, according to experts for the victims' families.

Lawsuits filed over both tragedies have recently been resolved — and Calumet Park and the city of Chicago will be paying out nearly a combined \$13 million.

The deaths and payouts shine a light on the risks that police pursuits continue to create on roadways despite toughened

Turn to **Chases**, Page 8

Report: CPS gift cards stolen, misused

Watchdog alleges wrongdoing by employees, families

BY JUAN PEREZ JR.
Chicago Tribune

Chicago Public Schools employees "stole or misappropriated" thousands of dollars worth of school-purchased gift cards that were intended to be used as incentives for students and

families, according to an annual report from the district's inspector general.

In one case, a principal of a school for vulnerable students stole presents of at least "\$500 in gift cards that were donated to the students and were intended to help address their specialized needs," Inspector General Nicholas Schuler's office found. The same principal gave to an acquaintance 30 new backpacks filled

with school supplies that had been donated, according to Schuler.

The misuse of gift cards was among a long list of alleged wrongdoing by teachers, principals and district families in the IG's annual report, which was released Wednesday. Among other findings of the report, which does not identify schools or employees by name:

■ An elementary school

principal spent at least \$22,000 in school funds for personal purchases at Costco and Apple stores.

■ A district agricultural program employee used his meat processing company to sell eggs produced at the school for a profit.

■ A principal used school funds to fund a "teachers' lunch club" featuring lobster, shrimp and steaks.

Turn to **Gift cards**, Page 6

Outcome tax credit deal on hold

Illinois has suspended a tax credit agreement with Outcome Health in the wake of allegations that the tech company misled investors and advertisers. **Business**

Celebs take stand on sex harassment

Inspired by recent harassment stories, the Time's Up initiative is backed by 300 female power players and millions of their dollars. **Heidi Stevens in A+E**



Tom Skilling's forecast High 14 Low -2

Chicago Weather Center: Complete forecast on back page of A+E section

\$2.50 city and suburbs, \$3.00 elsewhere
170th year No. 3 © Chicago Tribune



7 49485 00001 2